



SPRING 08 ISSUE 9

Welcome to British Waterways' London Newsletter, keeping you informed of key waterway issues in the capital and of activities on the 100 miles of canals, rivers and docks in our care.



PRESCOTT LOCK SHAPING UP

Plans to restore the rivers which criss-cross the Olympic Park are well underway with the construction of Prescott Lock and water control structures. British Waterways' contractors have been on site for almost a year and the lock chamber is taking shape.

Funded by BW, the Department for Transport, London Thames Gateway Development Corporation, the Olympic Delivery Authority and Transport for London, the new lock will enable large barges to access the area, helping to take hundreds of lorry journeys a week from local roads and save thousands of tonnes of CO₂. It will also enable the east end's rivers to play an important role in the wider regeneration of

the area, providing the focus for a new 'Water City'.

As well as building the lock, BW is working with regeneration partners to raise funds for further improvements to the river network including dredging, the restoration of locks within the Olympic Park, the construction of new wharves, upgrading of towpaths and a study into the feasibility of establishing passenger transport services.

The works were the focus for BW's pre-Christmas parliamentary reception, which brought together a range of cross-party MPs, councillors and stakeholders.

For more information visit www.britishwaterways.co.uk/olympics.



Since my appointment as Waterways Minister I have seen several new waterside regeneration schemes, including London's docklands and the Olympic waterways. I have seen how our waterways are bringing a broad range of economic, social and environmental benefits which fit in with government aims.

I have set up a new cross-government group with colleagues from departments for Culture, Media and Sport, Transport, Communities and Local Government, Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform, and Health to look at opportunities for fresh and joined-up thinking about how we can unlock the full potential of the inland waterway network.

Over the last few years, with the help of record government investment, British Waterways has done a tremendous amount to transforming the waterways into places that benefit millions of people across the country. The challenge over the coming years is to ensure that this renaissance continues and that the waterways thrive for generations to come.

Jonathan Shaw,
Waterways Minister, Defra

REDISCOVERING LONDON'S RIVERS & CANALS

The revival of London's waterways is currently being chronicled at an exhibition by New London Architecture. The show, which is run in association with British Waterways and sponsored by URS, features almost 50 new projects transforming London's waterways, including Paddington Basin, City Road Basin and a major new park in the Lower Lea Valley. The exhibition brings together, for the first time, the broad range of new waterside developments planned across London and examines their contribution to the Blue Ribbon Network policies of the Mayor's London Plan.

Waterfront London runs until 23 February. For more information and opening times call 020 7636 4044 or visit www.newlondonarchitecture.org.



NEW WATERSCAPE FOR THE ISLE OF DOGS

A major new community park and waterfront lie at the heart of new plans unveiled in December for the redevelopment of Wood Wharf on the Isle of Dogs.

The proposals include enhanced access to the waterspace with world class waterfront recreational areas, additional moorings and a new canal. Wood Wharf will include a new high street with shops, cafés and restaurants along with new affordable and family homes, offices, shops and community facilities all set within a world-class cityscape.

The scheme has been developed by international architectural practice, Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners, and landscape designers, Martha Schwartz Partners on behalf of a partnership between British Waterways, Canary Wharf Group and Ballymore Properties.

Full details are available at www.woodwharf.com.

SELLING BOATS ON MOORINGS

The high demand for canal moorings in London, fuelled in part by the high cost of housing, has led to boats in some central London locations passing hands for much more than their actual value – as people are prepared to pay premiums for the boat and the mooring. The practice is in breach of standard mooring licence agreements and has led to a slow down in moorings becoming available to those on waiting lists.

Due to an historical licensing error British Waterways has until now permitted it to continue on some central London mooring sites. However, following a recent ruling by the Waterway Ombudsman, we are keen to cease this practice and are contacting affected boaters to agree a timetable for phasing it out.

Gareth Stephens, leisure business manager for British Waterways London, explains: "Essentially some people have benefited from the value of publicly owned moorings in popular locations in central London, where house prices have risen dramatically. This is actually against their licence agreements and prevents other boat owners finding moorings in London. It is largely a London anomaly and represents less than 0.5% of our boating customers nationally. The majority of London moorers are not affected as they are on sites where selling on is not permitted or they have Houseboat certificates which allow them to sell their boat with their mooring."



KINGFISHERS THRIVING ON LONDON'S CANALS

British Waterways' fourth National Waterway Wildlife Survey included over 300 sightings of Britain's most brilliant bird, the kingfisher. Encouragingly, the survey indicated healthy populations of the iconic blue bird in urban areas including the Regent's Canal in Islington, Hackney and Tower Hamlets.

Leela O'Dea, London ecology manager for British Waterways, comments: "We are delighted to hear of so many sightings of kingfishers on our waterways. As well as being a strikingly beautiful bird, kingfishers are an important indicator of the general health of the waterway ecosystem, as like the big cats on the African plains, they are at the top of the waterway food chain."

"Good populations of kingfishers even in urban areas show the important role waterways have in greening our towns and cities by providing wildlife corridors which help sustain populations of a variety of both common and endangered species including bats, water voles and others."

If you have any views on the topics raised in this newsletter, or would like to discuss British Waterways' work in London, then please contact Ed Fox, head of communications, on 020 7985 7226 or edward.fox@britishwaterways.co.uk. You can also visit our website at www.britishwaterways.co.uk.